DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 081 556 56 RC 007 267

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TITLE Final Evaluation Accomplishment Audit of the Harlandale Independent School District's Bilingual Education Program.
INSTITUTION Harlandale Independent School District, San Antonio, Tex.
SPONS AGENCY Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Education (DHEW/OE), Washington, D.C. Div. of Bilingual Education.
PUB DATE 12 Jun 73
GRANT OEG-0-9-530014-3480(280)
NOTE 16p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS *Bilingual Education; Cost Effectiveness; Educational Accountability; Elementary Grades; *Federal Programs; Guidelines; *Mexican Americans; Minority Group Children; *Program Effectiveness; *Program Evaluation; Spanish Speaking; Systems Analysis
IDENTIFIERS Harlandale; *Texas

ABSTRACT

The audit report was made in compliance with the contractual agreements, legal prescriptions, and official directives under the provisions of Title VII of Public Law 89-10, as amended, for the establishment and operation of bilingual education programs. The audit report (June 12, 1973) is on the Bilingual Education Program (in its 4th year of operation) of the Harlandale Independent School District. This report gives a critique of the quality of the project evaluation, discusses the findings of the project and the audit, and confirms or questions the need for program modifications proposed as a result of the evaluation. The scope follows the suggested U.S. Office of Education audit report areas--(1) introductory and general comments concerning the quality and significance of the final evaluation report; (2) detailed critique of the product and process evaluation conducted for operation and management, based on an assessment of the instruments used, data collection procedures, data analysis techniques, and data analysis presentation; (3) findings and observations as a result of on-site visits and examination of evaluative data with a summary of consistencies and discrepancies; (4) recommendations for evaluation design revision; and (5) the need for program modification. (For related documents, see RC 007 266, 268.) (FF)

ED 081556

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FINAL EDUCATIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT AUDIT

OF THE

HARLANDALE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT'S

BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

(Harlandale is a member of the Consortium comprised by Harlandale Independent School District, San Marcos Independent School District, and Southwest Texas State University.)

1972-73

Submitted to:

Mr. René González
Project Director

and

The United States Office of Education as an educational accomplishment audit of the fourth year's operation of a program under the provisions of Title VII of P.L. 89-10, as amended.

Grant # OEG-0-9-530014-3480 (280)

BY

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June 12, 1973

RC007267

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EDUCATIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT AUDIT

REPORT FOR HARLANDALE

Purpose of the Report

This Audit Report is made in compliance with the contractual agreements, legal prescriptions, and official directives under the Provisions of Title VII of Public Law 89-10, as amended, for the establishment and operation of bilingual education programs. This is an Audit Report on the Bilingual Education Program of the Harlandale Independent School District. Although this program comprises two public school districts, Harlandale and San Marcos, and a university, Southwest Texas State University, separate evaluations and audits are being performed for the two school districts this year in accordance with the changed United States Office of Education directive. The program is in its fourth year of operation, having as its director this year Mr. Rene González. The purpose of this report is to give a critique concerning the quality of the project evaluation and discuss the comparative findings of the project and the audit, and to confirm or question the need for program modifications which have been proposed as a result of the project evaluation.

Scope of the Report

The Audit Report follows the suggested Audit Report Content Areas received from the United States Office of Education which is a part of the contractual agreement between the auditor and the program director as follows:

1. Introductory and general comments concerning the quality of the project evaluation and the comparative findings of the project evaluation and the audit.

2. Detailed critique of the product and process evaluation conducted for operation and management, based on an assessment of the instruments used, data collection procedures, data analysis techniques, and data analysis presentation.

3. Description of the auditor's on-site visit findings and their correlation with the evaluator's data and reports; summary of consistencies and discrepancies, and interpretation of the discrepancies.

4. Recommendations for revisions in the evaluation design, including a rationale for each recommendation. Since the auditor's objectivity can be retained only if the selection of a specific corrective action is a local decision, he should provide general rather than specific recommendations, posing several alternative actions or possible sources of assistance to the LEA in correcting the deficiency.

5. Confirmation or questioning of the need for program modifications which have been proposed as a result of project evaluation.

The audit areas described above will be referred to as sections in this report with section numbers corresponding to the audit area description numbers.

SECTION I

Introductory and General Comments Concerning the Quality and Significance of the Final Evaluation Report

The Evaluation Report for 1972-73 has followed the evaluation design. The evaluator has accomplished very well the purposes of a bilingual program evaluation, which in this instance has been curtailed by federal directives to only the instructional component.

The Evaluation Report for 1972-73 is a remarkable document because of its scientific objectivity, penetrating analyses, logical and lucid interpretations, perceptive appraisals, and fundamentally sound recommendations. Project and administrative officials would not be remiss to consider the evaluator's findings in their future educational plans.

This report uses the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of statistical data as its basic format. The extensive use of statistical data is an appropriate technique for specific measurement of learning growth and levels of achievement.

Many of the expected performance objectives are evaluated by means of realistic criterion-referenced quantitative measures. At first glance the statistical data may appear to be a bit excessive, however, these data are most appropriate in an adequate evaluative study.

Concern is often raised by many persons about the relevancy and appropriateness of certain evaluation instruments. This concern has been especially strong in the testing of minority students. The evaluator of this project has used a wide variety of measures with several of them administered bilingually or written in Spanish and English. The interpretative comments call for appropriate modifications taking into consideration the target pupil population. The deversity in individual classrooms and in reasonable achievement expectations is evidenced in this report. It is obvious that selection and use of tests in a project such as this need constant review in search of more valid means of assessment; however, the utilization of more accurate methods of scoring these tests and the availability of longitudinal studies lend support to the instruments now being used. The auditor has noted that the scores of the pupils in the program are being compared to their earlier performance under the same conditions; therefore, one can argue that the evaluation results should not be critized, but that learning opportunities need to be assessed and replanned. The evaluator has made several constructive suggestions.

As verified in an interview with the evaluator, the auditor has ascertained that the team of examiners as well as the classroom teachers themselves are the most experienced assessment staff since the project began four years ago. This experienced team has facilitated a more effective individualized oral and written testing program. These strengths along with electronic computer services aid the evaluator with more analytical techniques in data interpretation, and certainly are commendable additions to the evaluation dimensions.

The graphic presentations facilitate comparisons and add greatly to the comprehension and interpretation of the data by the concerned reader. Suggestions of remediation aspects for the project are more easily obtained from these visual aids. The evaluator has made these graphics explicit.

The auditor notes that improvements in evaluation techniques usually result in magnification to the visibility of instructional results. This clearer view of aspects of the project should not result in dissatisfaction with the evaluation but on the other hand it should bring into focus certain program aspects in need of revision and remediation.

The objectives of the bilingual project are the following: (1) to reduce the Spanish-surnamed pupils' educational deficit by instructing them in Spanish while their command of English is being developed; (2) to enhance their understanding and cognitive development in both languages; (3) to give them the advantage of becoming literate in both languages; and, (4) to instill in them knowledge of and pride in their bicultural heritage. The evaluation report is expected to show some indication of how well these objectives have been achieved this year. An on-going assessment of the project's objectives as to their practicality needs to be part of the program itself.

Objectivity and comprehensiveness appear to be major characteristics of this report. The recommendations are educationally sound, clearly stated, and are based on much empirical evidence.

A project description, beginning on Page 1 of the evaluation report, is an accurate account. There are four objectives of the bilingual program which have appropriately been placed as the first part of this section. These intended outcomes are the criterion on which the entire project should be evaluated. Several comments through this audit speak to the adequacy of the evaluation in obtaining these goals.

Table I, "Teachers, Schools, and Summary of Pupil Data," shows teacher assignments by schools, grade levels, and class sizes. Of the eight schools with 55 teachers in the program, two schools involving 14 teachers employ team-teaching arrangements. There are 1517 children in grades K-5 in eight of Harlandale's fifteen elementary schools involved in the project. Ninety-nine percent of these children have Spanish-surnames with a majority from homes in which Spanish is the dominant language.

In spite of the fact that the Consortium, which operates the bilingual project, encompasses two cities some fifty miles apart, all aspects of the program have functioned well. Since each of the two public school districts involved has had its own coordinator of the learning component, very little, if any, detrimental effect on the instructional program has resulted because of one district being fiscal agent, while offices for the project director and the evaluator along with the university facilities and the other school district were in a separate city.

As has been mentioned in the Interim Report, a major change in the program this year is the assumption of financing for the second grade as well as the first by the local district. This is even greater evidence of the commitment by the school district to bilingual education.

A major management personnel change has been made this year--a new project director, Mr. Rene González, has replaced Mr. Carlos Rodriguez. The auditor concurs with the evaluator that increased efficiency as well as community involvement by a new full-time director has enhanced the total bilingual project.

Under the direction of last year's project director, Mr. Carlos Rodriguez, Southwest Texas State University's bilingual-bicultural teacher-training center has greatly contributed to this bilingual project. It is easily observed that in addition to the pre-service training of teachers, this program has contributed to the efficiency of the testing and instructional aspects of the project.

SECTION II

Detailed Critique of the Product and Process Evaluation Conducted for Operation and Management, Based on an Assessment of the Instruments Used, Data Collection Procedures, Data Analysis Techniques, and Data Analysis Presentation

It has been observed that this year's federal guidelines curtailed evaluation to the instructional component, therefore, other components, such as staff development (p. 1), were dealt with only incidentally as they affect instruction. Also, directives accorded that standardized tests form the backbone of the evaluation this year and other performance objectives have been eliminated from the design. It is the auditor's belief that a total evaluation of achievement should include various subjective assessments as well, however, the instruments selected for this year's project evaluation are very feasible under the federal directives.

The auditor's critique and comments are limited to his knowledge and experiences with the project since the middle of the school year (February 7, 1973). The illness of the former auditor, Dr. Guy C. Pryor, necessitated a change. As time permitted, every school campus, school principal, and project administrative personnel were visited. These visits, test samples, test instruments, as well as classroom processes are bases for this report. More information will be related later in this report under the section on "On-Site Visits".

The project evaluation was conducted very effectively and efficiently on schedule as planned and supervised by the evaluator. The kindergarten and first grade students were evaluated individually on vocabulary by a trained testing team composed of Southwest Texas State University's intern student teachers. The regular classroom teachers administered readiness and achievement tests in cooperation with the evaluator. The auditor has observed that the individual examiners are quite experienced, due perhaps to the fact that many have worked in the program for several

years. The project evaluator can be commended for a very highly organized and well-planned operation and management of testing procedures. This function was carried out in a most business-like manner. Further comments will follow as the auditor critiques the evaluation product and process.

Scores for Peabody tests and those for all other evaluation instruments administered are put on cards and electronically processed. The process of returning feedback on these scores to project teachers not only allows for early diagnosing of pupil weaknesses but also facilitates earlier corrective action. The auditor observes this as a significant factor in the learning process--especially as the number of pupils increases, more data is gathered and disseminated in the evaluation process.

Table II, "Peabody Picture Vocabulary Tests," compares 1971-72 dominant and balanced language pupil mean scores with those of 1972-73 for kindergarten and first grade pupils. The significant evidence of handicaps in concept formulation in both sets of figures presented magnifies the need for teachers to implement extensive measures to reduce this deficit.

A very real accomplishment for the bilingual kindergarten was observed when fall Peabody mean scores for first graders were compared. Forty-three bilingual kindergarten pupils who attended Collier school last year were ahead of two groups of first graders who had been in non-bilingual kindergarten classrooms or had not been in kindergarten at all (Table III). This is commendable and represents the fulfillment of project objectives to reduce concept deficits.

When fall and spring Peabody scores of pupils in kindergarten and first grade were compared, greater numbers achieved expectable gains in English than in Spanish (Table IV). Specific classrooms had differences of as much as 58% variation. Although gratifying gains were shown in mean increase on Peabody scores, variation in mean scores between classrooms showed a rather wide range of success (Table V). It is

stressed by the auditor that the coordinator follow closely the recommendations by the evaluator to study Table V and take appropriate action with improvement in teaching of concept development. It is satisfying to observe that overall analysis of Peabody scores, including quartile assessment (Table VI), shows that teachers in the project are successfully working to remedy the concept deficit.

The Metropolitan Readiness Test and Metropolitan Achievement Test results, (Tables VII-VIII), indicate a high percentage of success toward behavioral objectives for kindergarten and first grade students. The auditor concurs that the bilingual program is successfully fulfilling the objective of reducing educational deficit. The graphic presentations give a clear picture of explanations and findings--especially the graphs illustrating variability and growth at three quartile levels facilitate comparisons, (Tables XIII-XIV). These are commendable procedures.

The evaluator reports (p. 27) that in grades 2-5 generally the amount of gain is good for Metropolitan Achievement Test areas of word discrimination, language, and math computation, (Tables IX-XII). A few percentages in these areas, as well as social studies and science, had lesser degrees of success.

When quartile scores were analyzed, (Tables XV-XVIII), a large variability existed between classrooms as to the percentage of pupil success. Also, a large variability existed between classrooms as to the area(s) of pupil success. Medians in word discrimination, math computation, and language are usually shown higher than those in word knowledge, reading comprehension, and math problem solving/concepts. The evaluator has high-lighted the evidence produced by the data that there is a great need for extensive consultation among the coordinator and teachers. Determining reasons for expertise in some areas and a sharing of this expertise with fellow teachers, as well as further college work or in-service training for needy teachers, are suggested. The auditor concurs that the coordinator approach this recommendation as soon as possible in a most professional manner.

It has been noted that the pupils in the second grade are even with national norms but fall further behind the national norms on these achievement tests each year that they are in school. The evaluator points out (p. 28) that there is no achievement test on the market at this time which is constructed for or normed for the pupil population represented in this project. It is recommended by the auditor that, whether bilingual projects are continued on a locally or federally funded basis, some type of standardized achievement assessment device be sought. The school district should keep a constant vigil for such an instrument.

According to the evaluator, the Inter-Americana Spanish reading test, the Prueba de Lectura, was administered to grades two, three, four, and five, (Table XIX). Only raw scores were used to compare progress. The test was reported as being difficult (pp. 28-29), but was the only one available at the commencement of this project and is presently used so that a longitudinal study is possible next year. The evaluator is to be commended for the clear and accurate summative analyses and comments. Although results are generally good, there is a wide variation reported in some mean scores, (Tables XX-XXI). The coordinator should study the recommendations of the evaluator so that the level of achievement expected is gained in all classrooms. Perhaps a less difficult reading test might be employed in the project after the longitudinal study is made next year.

Results of evaluation in grades 1-4 with the Bilingual Education Program locally-constructed tests in social studies and science were reported as rather good. (See Table XXII.) Half of the classrooms were given the English version of the test, and the other half were given the Spanish version. Means and standard deviations were derived for fall and spring scores to determine whether accomplishment was higher in English or Spanish, (Tables XXIII-XXIV). The statistical t-test of variance between English and Spanish performance planned for next year should prove interesting. The auditor recommends

that the Bilingual Education Program test forms be clearly printed so that children will be able to distinguish the pictures withbut difficulty.

One factor directly related to achievement by the pupils was the amount of time teachers spent teaching various areas of learning. The coordinator, curriculum writer, and evaluator have taken much time to report this data in Tables XXV, XXVI, and XXVII. The successful or poor test results along with the improvement levels over last year correspond very closely with the percentage of time spent on a particular subject area. The percentage of time the language was used to convey the material correlated highly with the degree of success in performance as well. The coordinator would do well to study these tables and follow the evaluator's suggestions.

The data reported in Tables XXVIII and XXIX, "Inferred Self-Concept Scales," presents creditable evidence that the bilingual education program is indeed helping many Spanish-surnamed pupils to achieve a more positive self-image. The auditor commends the teachers and scorers on the amount of time and effort obviously expended in evaluating this phase of the project. Due to the fact that this type of evaluation is highly subjective, the auditor recommends that a general meeting of all teachers evaluating with these forms have a brief in-service workshop with Dr. Elizabeth McDaniel, author of the instrument, at the beginning of next school year. Perhaps a better understanding of how to score the self-concept scale would reassure validity and reliability of this evaluative device.

The bilingual project is to be commended in general for its attempts to prevent drop-out of students. Certainly, success in this endeavor will affect the program positively. The two-day conference planned by Mr. Carlos Rodriguez in November which 45 central and south Texas administrators attended is a positive approach.

The evaluator has done commendable work in comparing control groups taught in traditional classrooms to those of experimental bilingual groups this year for the

first time. The comparisons were made in second, third, and fourth grade classes. Two severe limitations existed in the study, and realistic assessment reported (pp. 53-54) that there seems to be no advantage indicated in either group, although five of the seven statistically significant comparisons favored the experimental group. Significant variables, especially the teacher variable, could not be controlled which contributed to doubtful validity of the study. As it appears feasible, more studies of this kind are recommended.

Other components vitally associated with the learning process and evaluative process and alluded to only briefly in this report appear to have had a positive direction this year. The auditor certainly concurs that the call for devoting of more time to concept development and reading comprehension this year was warranted and well-founded. The coordinator and supervisors have been working diligently toward a stronger teaching staff. (See p. 56.) Parental contacts with the schools and their interest is increasing. All of these facts are creditable signs for a successful program.

SECTION III

Findings and Observations as a Result of On-Site Visits and Examination of Evaluative Data with a Summary of Consistencies and Discrepancies

The activities engaged in by the auditor on on-site visits included:

1. Employed by Mr. René González, project director, and Dr. Helene Harrison, project evaluator in early February at which time duties of the auditor were discussed.

2. Attended several follow-up conferences with evaluator and project director to discuss relationships between evaluating and auditing processes.

3. Examined and approved all tests, rating forms and scales, and evaluation instruments.

4. Interviewed teachers and principals.

5. Observed post-test administrations.

6. Conferred with testing-team members as well as teachers.

7. Sampled most adequately the test results, opinionnaires, rating scales, data, and data processing techniques.

8. Conferred with the project coordinator, curriculum writer, and other resource personnel.

9. Examined samples of curriculum and instructional materials used in the project.

10. Attended meeting of LEA administrators, project personnel, elementary principals, and teachers concerning the implementation of bilingual projects.

11. Conferred with LEA administrators concerning plans.

12. Visited several bilingual classrooms.

13. Went over the evaluation and audit report with evaluator and other personnel.

The thoroughness of the discussions between the evaluator, the auditor, the director, coordinator, and other personnel has reflected a minimum of discrepancies between the evaluation design and findings and the auditor's checking and conclusions. The consistencies are very numerous indeed. As mentioned in Sections I and II, numerous specifics have been identified which need not be repeated. The many appraisal statements of the evaluation and its findings in these sections reflect aspects of the consistencies and discrepancies. The completeness of the evaluative data with its careful analysis and objective interpretation have reduced the discrepancies to a minimum. Major concerns are raised relating to the recommendations of the evaluator on Page 58 of the report. These recommendations are well-founded in the evaluation data.

The first recommendation concerning minimizing of pupil drop-out-of-the-program is well founded. Certainly all administrators need be cognizant of maintaining more pupil continuity.

The suggestions for the continuing need for recruitment of bilingual teachers are well established.

The recommendations for more effective time allocation in team-teaching should be studied and implemented. Concept development in both languages is apparently in need of further study.

The suggestion--"the importance of spending less time on phonics, spelling, and sound discrimination and more time on reading comprehension in both English and Spanish language arts."--is strongly indicated by evidence. A limited use of cuadernos as a suggestion should be heeded.

Recommendations by the evaluator concurred to by the auditor stated that the coordinators should scrutinize the tables in the evaluation report to determine instances of teachers' strengths and weaknesses. A follow-up with planned improvement procedures and/or sharing of expertise by individual teachers is suggested.

Once again, the auditor agrees unequivocally with these educationally sound recommendations. They are clearly stated, completely valid, and should be implemented in order to make the project the most valid possible.

SECTION IV

Recommendations for Revision of the Evaluation Design

Only one minor recommendation for revision within the evaluation design is suggested by the auditor. If a standardized test with regional and/or national norms is available, it should replace tests now being used with only raw scores. Perhaps this would be more feasible after the project has operated for five years and appropriate longitudinal studies attempted.

With the scope of the evaluation for this project being limited by federal directives this year, the auditor recommends no major changes at this time. Another

look at the uniformity of scoring by various teachers on the pupil self-concept scale might be considered.

SECTION V

Confirmation or Questioning of the Need for Program Modifications which Have Been Proposed as A Result of Project Evaluation

The auditor of this project has found no cause to question the recommendations for program revisions. A strong endorsement of these suggestions is appropriate.

The classroom teacher is the most important factor effecting the outcome of the bilingual, bicultural educational project. The auditor most sincerely confirms that any recommendations for performance improvements of the classroom teacher should be re-emphasized. If the behavioral objectives of the program are to be achieved in a more effective manner, the teacher must constantly plan proper activities which will give children opportunities to practice the intended terminal behaviors.

It is most proper that the suggested modifications based on revelations of the project evaluation be implemented with all haste.

Summary of Recommendations and Comments

1. The Final Evaluation Report for 1972-73 has been limited in scope as compared to former years, yet is very comprehensive and most specific.

2. The evaluation is accurate, and the data have been propoerly analyzed and interpreted.

3. The recommendations and suggestions made by the evaluator are derived from thorough assessments and are educationally sound and administratively feasible. They should be studied by all educators associated with the project and the n implemented.

4. The LEA administrators should be cognizant of a continuing need for pupil retention in the project, as well as of a constant need for bilingual teacher recruitment.

5. Although there is a continued effort for improving the learning of concepts in both English and Spanish, a more concerted effort should be made. Also, Spanish-language teaching should be given more time, especially on lower grade levels.

6. According to suggestions, more time should be spent on reading comprehension in both English and Spanish and less time on phonics, spelling, and sound discrimination.

7. As has been stated earlier, a careful look at tables in the project evaluation should be made to determine weak and strong areas for respective teachers. Remedial or refresher measures and/or a sharing of expertise should be followed for and by these teachers.

8. The administrators of Harlandale Independent School District and Southwest Texas State University along with the San Marcos Independent School District are to be commended for having initiated and made provisions for a bilingual instructional program through these four years with improvements each year.

9. The auditor has observed that the evaluator has been very responsive to suggestions, and discussed these in a professional manner. Each recommendation has been responded to promptly with appropriate and satisfactory dispatch. The Evaluation Report is highly commended.

10. The project has much merit and should be funded in some manner after the projected five-year period.